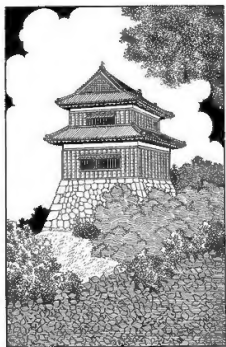




phoenix

STRANGE BEINGS/LIFE



BY OSAMU TEZUKA

Phoenix: Strange Beings/Life
Vol. 9
VIZ Signature Edition

STORY AND ART BY
OSAMU TEZUKA

English Translation by Jared Cook and Frederik L. Schodt
Touch-up Art & Lettering/Primary Graphics
Design/Izumi Evers
Editor/Ian Robertson

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A message to our readership:

Some of the phrasing and expressions in the work you are about to read reflect the time and context in which it was originally created and thus might not be in accordance with present standards. The author had an unflinching dedication to conveying several themes through the art of manga, such as the importance of nature, love and peace; a warning against the idolization of science, and the preciousness of life. It is clear that at the root of his work there is a strong belief in the power of human love overall.

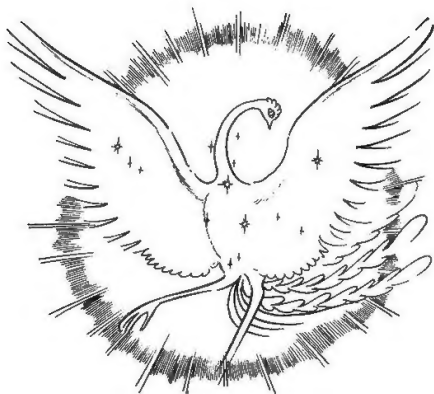
We believe that publishing a faithful translation is essential to accurately conveying the message within the work itself as intended by the author, as well as protecting its integrity as a part of Japan's cultural heritage and preserving it for future generations. We therefore appreciate your understanding as you enjoy this work of art.

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Published by VIZ Media, LLC
P.O. Box 77010
San Francisco, CA 94107



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AH, THE
VENERABLE
NUN...
THE NUN OF
HOURAIJI...
IN TONDO
MISAKI...





A black and white illustration of a traditional Chinese pavilion with a curved roof, situated on a cliff. Below the pavilion, a group of people in traditional Chinese clothing are celebrating. A man and a woman are running towards the left, while a group of people are standing on the cliff edge, clapping. A small white dog is also visible. The background features a large, stylized cloud formation.

SHE LIVES FOR EIGHT
HUNDRED YEARS...
HER GOOD DEEDS
LAST FOR
THOUSANDS...

IF IT'S PROOF YOU
WANT...
ASK ANY MAN...
ASK ANY WOMAN...

244

244



RUMBLE

FLASH



FASH! **BOMBE!**

COME ON,
KAHEI! KEEP
MOVING!

MASTER...I CAN'T
KEEP UP...I'M
EXHAUSTED...

CRRAC **CKKK SNAP**

KERBOOM!



WHAT'S
THE
MATTER
WITH YOU,
ANYWAY?

I'M
SCARED, SIR...
AN' I DON'T CARE
IF TREES ARE
FALLIN' OR
LIGHTNING'S
STRIKING, I CAN'T
GO ANOTHER
STEP!

HMPH. THE
ROAD WE
CAME UP IS
BLOCKED, SO
THERE'S NO
TURNING BACK
NOW, KAHET...

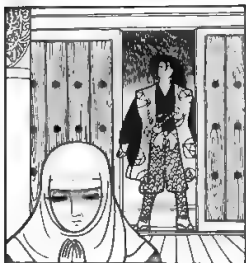
DON'T WORRY.
I CAN SEE SOME
LIGHT FROM A
BUILDING OVER
THERE...

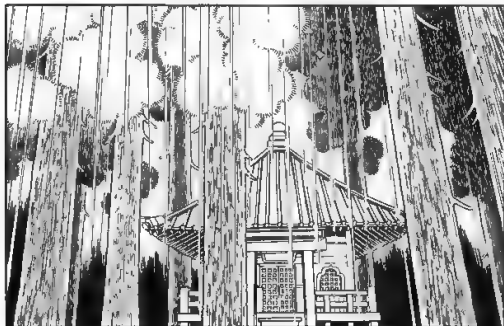
IT'S
PROBABLY
THE TEMPLE
WE'VE BEEN
LOOKING
FOR...

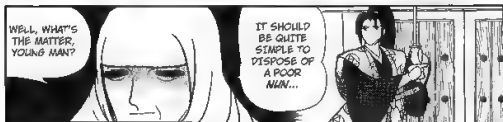
C'MON, THEN,
MASTER...
LET'S GO!!





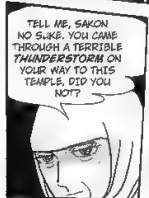








ENOUGH
NONSENSE,
WOMAN!



TELL ME, SAKON
NO SUKE, YOU CAME
THROUGH A TERRIBLE
THUNDERSTORM ON
YOUR WAY TO THIS
TEMPLE, DID YOU
NOT?



AND ON THE WAY,
THOUGH HEAVEN AND
EARTH SEEMED
SHROUDED IN
DARKNESS, YOU NO
DOUBT SAW FLASHES
OF LIGHTNING,
DID YOU NOT?



THAT'S RIGHT, I
DID THERE'S A
STORM RAGING
OUTSIDE RIGHT
NOW !

SO
WHAT?

WELL.. SAKON NO
SUIKE LET ME TELL
YOU. THIS PLACE IS
CUT OFF FROM THE
REST OF THE WORLD

TIME HERE
IS DIFFERENT
IT FLOWS
BACKWARD



T...TIME
FLOWS
BACKWARD?

W...WHAT
ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT?



WELL, YOU
WERE
ABLE TO
ENTER
THIS
PLACE, BUT
YOU'LL
NEVER BE
ABLE TO
LEAVE...

TIME
HAS NO
MEANING
HERE.



AFTER A FEW DAYS,
YOU'LL REALIZE
THAT IT IS
DIFFERENT FROM
THE OUTSIDE WORLD
HERE. AND THAT AS
LONG AS YOU LIVE,
YOU'LL NEVER BE
ABLE TO LEAVE...



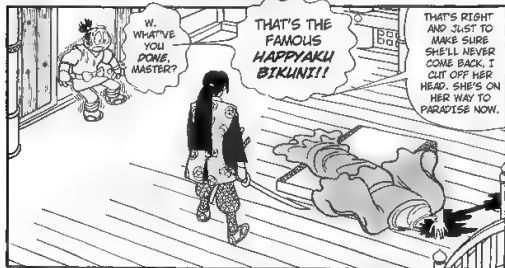
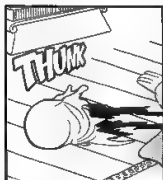
CRAZY
WOMAN!
HOW
DARE YOU
LAUGH AT
ME?!

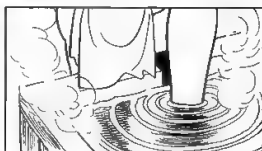


SLASH!!





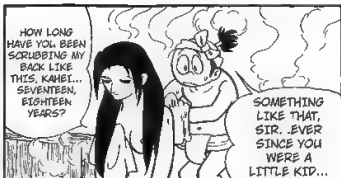




TRUNCATED FORM OF "NAMU AMIDA BUTSU," INVOKING THE BUDDHA'S NAME



AT YOUR
SERVICE,
SIR .



HOW LONG
HAVE YOU BEEN
SCRUBBING MY
BACK LIKE
THIS, KAHEI...
SEVENTEEN,
EIGHTEEN
YEARS?

SOMETHING
LIKE THAT,
SIR. .EVER
SINCE YOU
WERE A
LITTLE KID...



WE'RE OF
DIFFERENT
CLASSES.

...BUT YOU'RE THE
ONLY ONE I CAN
OPEN MY HEART
TO.

IT'S AN
HONOR,
SIR...



KAHEI...

YOU SEEM
TO HAVE
SOME
DOUBTS
ABOUT WHAT
I'VE JUST
DONE.



NOTHING
OF THE
SORT,
SIR...

I'M JUST
HERE TO
SERVE
YOU...



KAHEI, I
ADMIRE YOUR
SELFLESSNESS..

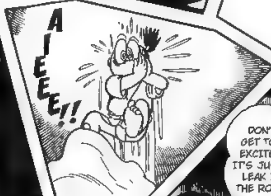


BUT DON'T
YOU WANT
TO KNOW
WHY
I KILLED
HAPPYAKU
BIKUNI?

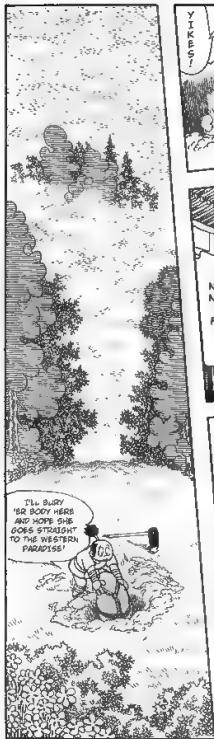
DON'T YOU
WISH TO KNOW
THE REAL
REASON?

IT'S REALLY
NONE OF MY
BUSINESS,
MASTER..

I DON'T
DESERVE
YOUR
PRAISE,
SIR



I FELT THIS COLD, SLIMY THING ON MY NECK, AN... I G. GOT SCARED!!



I'LL BURY
HER BODY HERE
AND HOPE SHE
GOES STRAIGHT
TO THE WESTERN
PARADISE!



YIKES!



HELP!
I'VE BEEN
CURSED!



NANMAIDA
NANMAIDA
PLEASE
FORGIVE
ME!!

諸仏滅度已
若人善歎心
雖生從本來
常自寂滅相

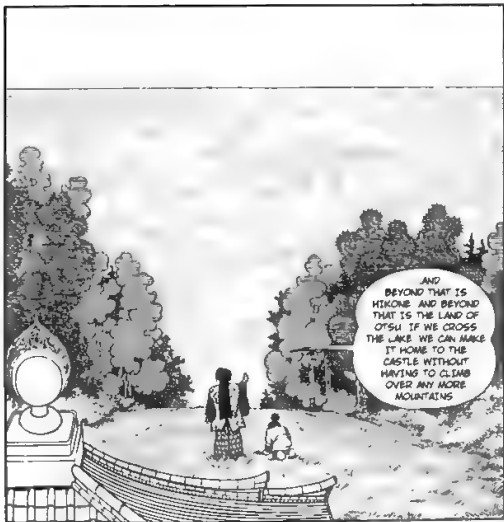


MASTER! LOOK!
THE FOG'S
LIFTING! LOOK!
THERE'S AN
OCEAN!

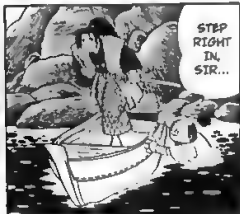


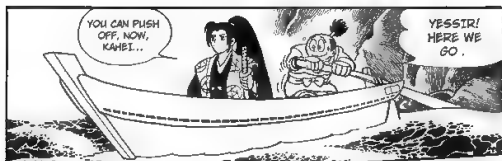
NO, THAT'S
NOT THE
OCEAN,
KAHEI! IT'S
A LAKE.

IF I'M NOT
MISTAKEN,
THIS PLACE
HERE IS
CALLED
TOKYO
MISAKI, SO
WE'RE JUST
NORTH OF
LAKE BIWA



WE'RE IN LUCK, SIR! THERE'S A BOAT WAITING FOR US RIGHT HERE!





YOU CAN PUSH
OFF, NOW,
KAHEI...

YESSIR!
HERE WE
GO.



WHAT'S
THE
MATTER?

I DUNNO..
BUT THIS OAR
SUDDENLY FEELS
AWFULLY
HEAVY.

'FEELS LIKE
IT'S STUCK
IN THE MUD...

C'MON,
OAR!!



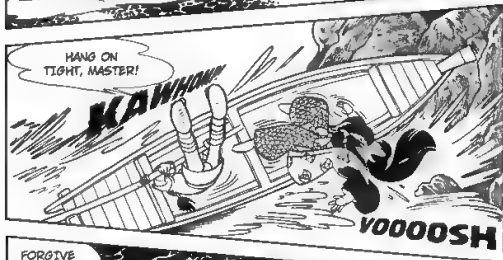
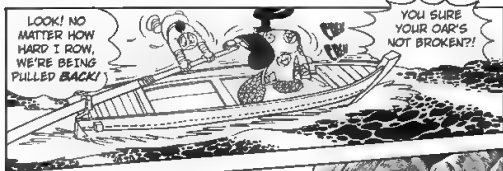
ARGH...!
BLAST
THIS
STUPID
BOAT!

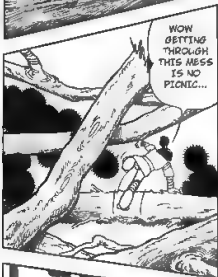
I'M ROWING
AS HARD AS
I CAN, AND
WE'RE
HARDLY
BUDGING!!

THERE'RE
SCARCELY ANY
WAVES, BUT
WE'RE BEING
PUSHED BACK
TOWARD THE
SHORE!!

WHAT'S
GOING
ON!?

WE
MUST BE
CURSED,
MASTER!









*HOURAJI TEMPLE





UH,
MASTER.
YOU'LL WEAR
YOURSELF OUT LIKE
THIS. WHY DON'T
YOU REST A WHILE
BACK AT THE
TEMPLE. ?



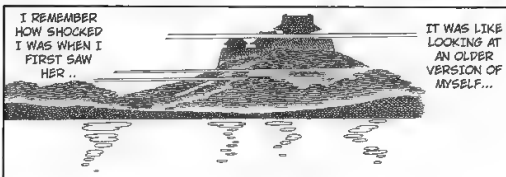
HERE...I
BOILED
SOME TEA
FOR YOU...

SOMETHING'S NOT
RIGHT ABOUT
THIS TEMPLE,
KAHEI .IT FEELS
AS IF IT HAS
DRAWN ME IN AND
WON'T LET GO. .



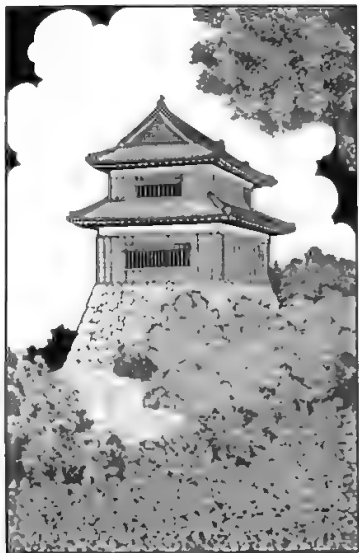
PERHAPS IT'S
BECAUSE I LOOK
TOO MUCH LIKE
THAT NUN,
HAPPYAKU
BIKUNI...

I WAS AT MY
FATHER'S
BEDSIDE WHEN
HE FIRST
SUMMONED HER
TO THE CASTLE...



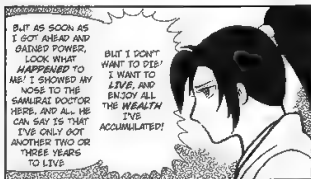
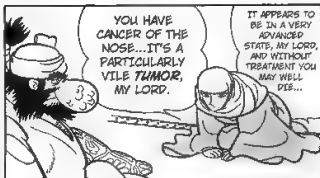
I REMEMBER
HOW SHOCKED
I WAS WHEN I
FIRST SAW
HER ..

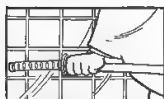
IT WAS LIKE
LOOKING AT
AN OLDER
VERSION OF
MYSELF...

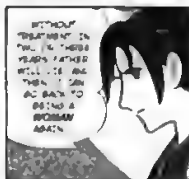
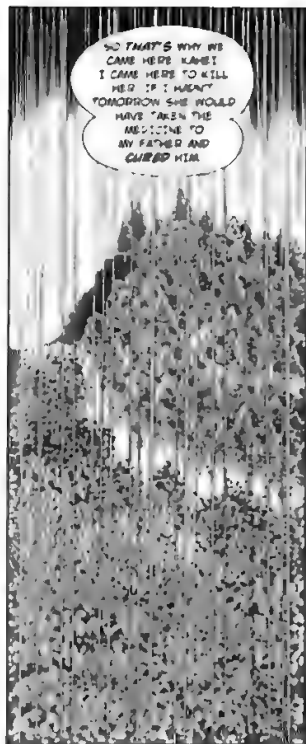


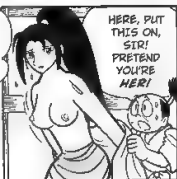
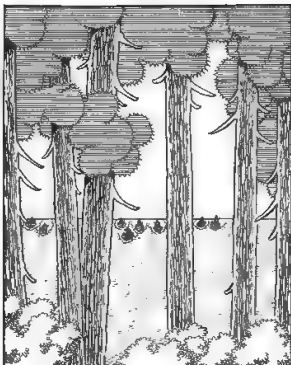


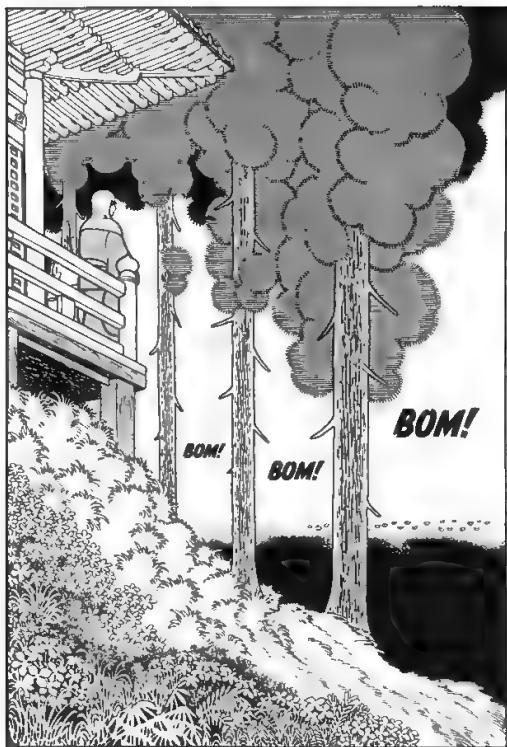


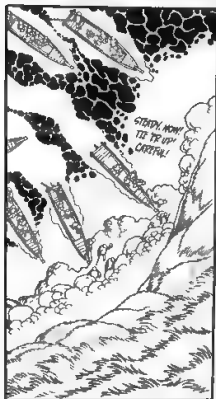
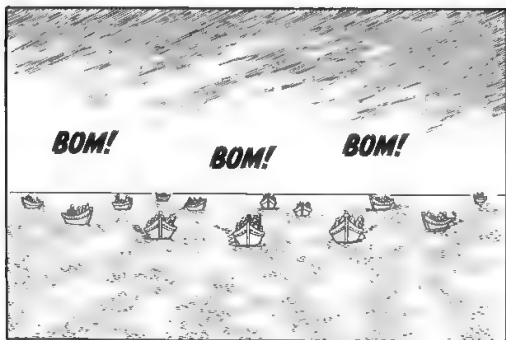


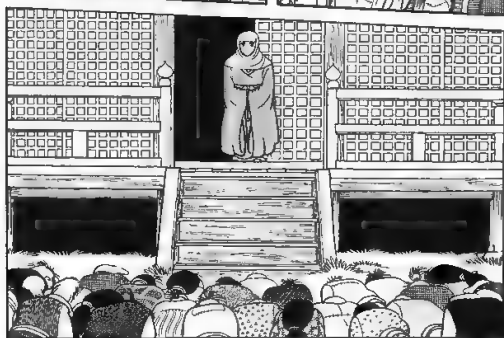


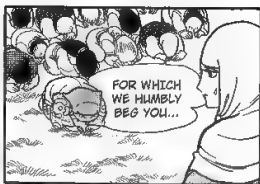






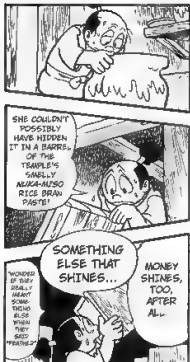
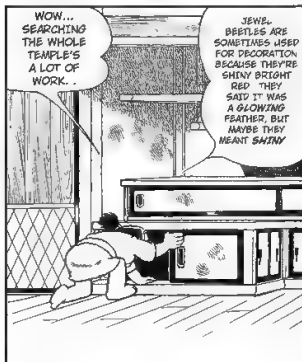
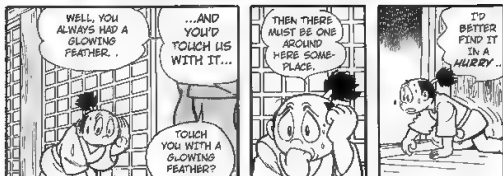


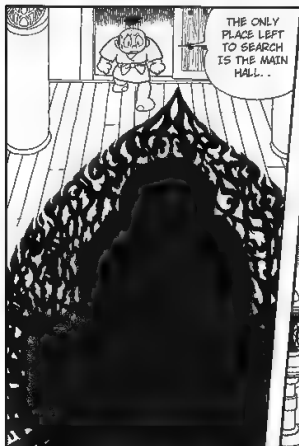


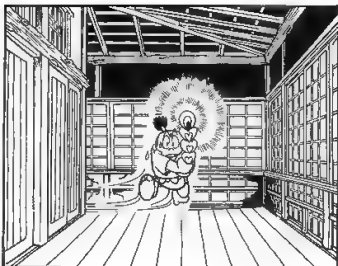
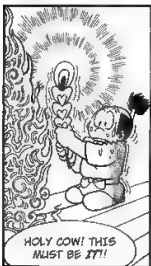
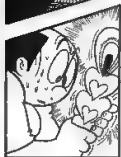
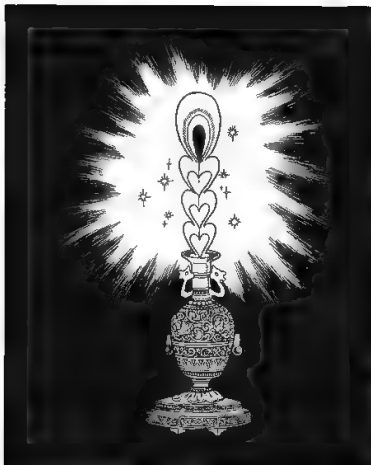


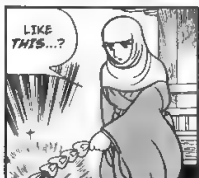
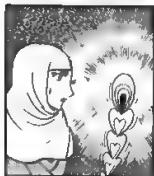
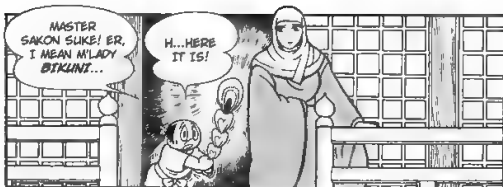


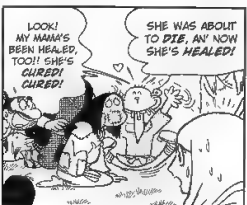
*MOXIBUSTION: A KIND OF THERAPY, POPULAR IN ASIA, INVOLVING THE BURNING OF POWDERED MUGWART

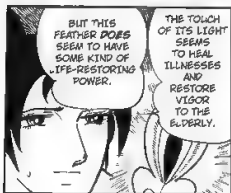
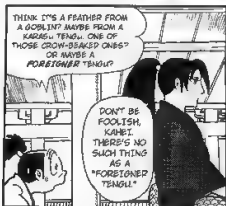
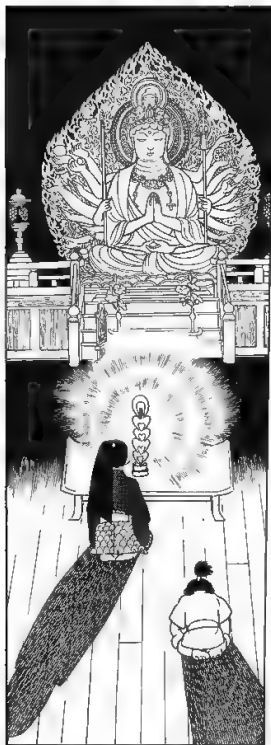














ONCE, I EVEN
SAW MY
FATHER CUT
DOWN ONE OF
HIS OWN
RETAINERS,
RIGHT BEFORE
MY EYES!

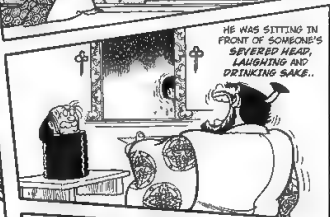
余音礼能音



ANOTHER TIME, I
SAW MY FATHER,
ALL ALONE IN THE
MAIN HALL..



HE WAS SITTING IN
FRONT OF SOMEONE'S
SEVERED HEAD,
LAUGHING AND
DRINKING SAKE..



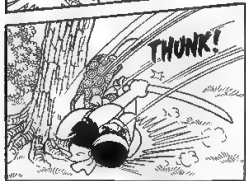
AND WHEN MY
FATHER TAUGHT
ME FENCING, I WAS
AFRAID HE WANTED
TO MURDER ME...



HE WAS
CRAZY...



SCROLL: SILENCE IS THE SOUND OF PERFECTION





WHEN DID I
EVER ASK YOU
TO BEAR ME A
DAUGHTER,
ANYWAY, EH?
SAKON SUKE
IS MY SON!
A BOY!



C'MON, SON!
YOU'VE GOTTA
COME AT ME LIKE
I'M YOUR MORTAL
ENEMY!!

ON
YOUR
FEET!

Y...
YES
SIR...



WHAP

BAM

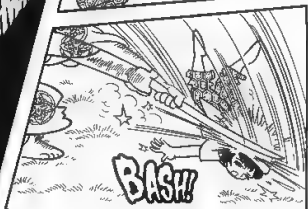
WHACK

WHAP

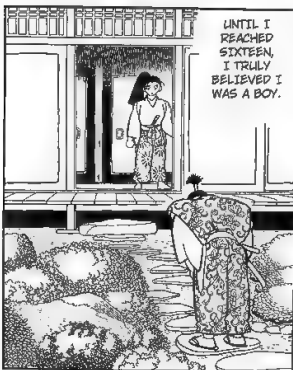
THWACK



KERWACH!

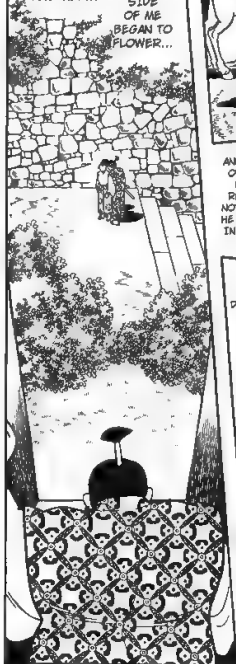


BASH!



WE BECAME
DEEPLY
ATTACHED
TO ONE
ANOTHER...

BUT AS
SOON
AS THE
FEMINE
SIDE
OF ME
BEGAN TO
FLOWER...



FATHER TOOK
HIM AWAY
FROM ME.

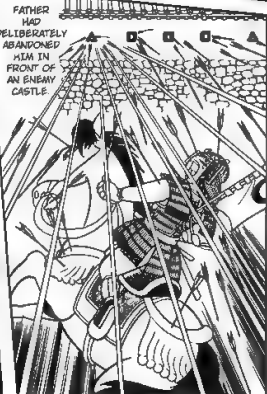
AND SENT
HIM OFF TO
WAR

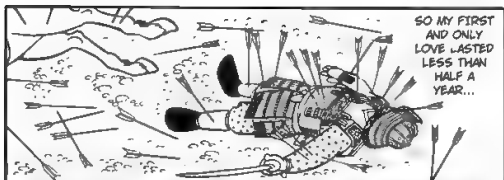


AND IN TWO
OR THREE
DAYS, I
RECEIVED
NOTICE THAT
HE HAD DIED
IN BATTLE!!



FATHER
HAD
DELIBERATELY
ABANDONED
HIM IN
FRONT OF
AN ENEMY
CASTLE.





SO MY FIRST
AND ONLY
LOVE LASTED
LESS THAN
HALF A
YEAR...



MY FATHER
STOLE
EVERYTHING
I LOVED.

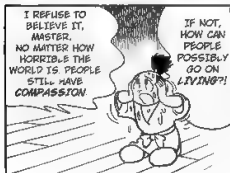
HE EVEN
SENT MY MOTHER
AWAY AS A WAR
HOSTAGE.

AND DIDN'T
BAT AN EYE
WHEN
SHE WAS
KILLED.

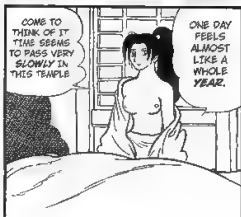
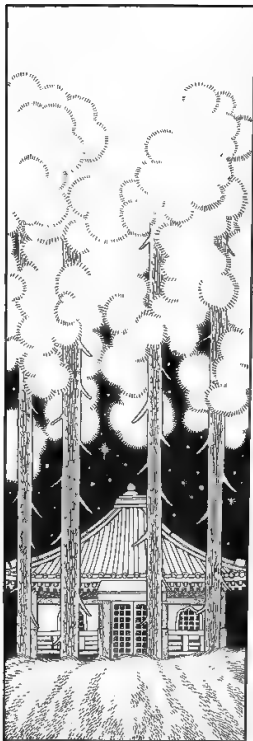
THE ONLY
THING MY
FATHER TRIED
TO FOSTER
IN ME WAS
HIS OWN
BLOODTHIRSTY
CHARACTER...

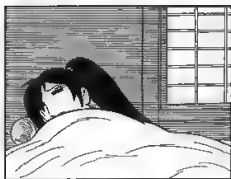


AND I KNEW
THAT EVENTUALLY
I WOULD BECOME
LIKE HIM, THAT I
WOULD BECOME
ANOTHER CRUEL
MONSTER...









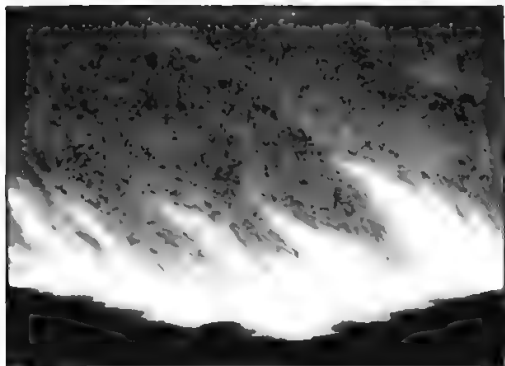
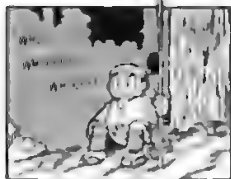
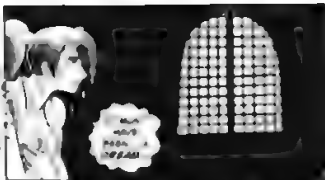
GIVE...
US...
BACK...
OUR...
LIVES...

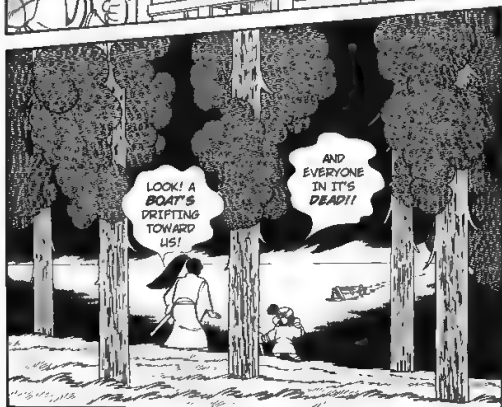
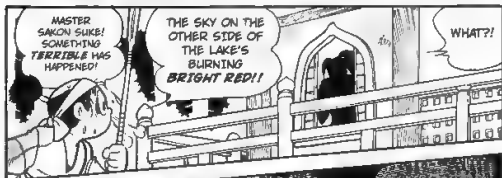
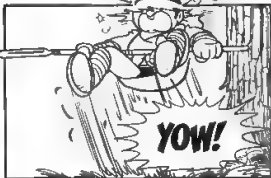
AND...
OUR...
LEGS...

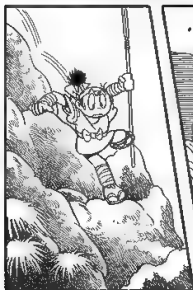
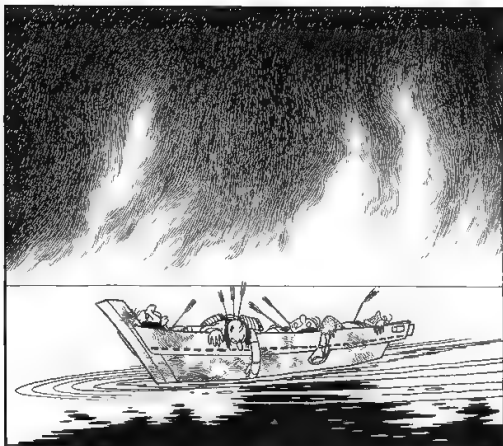
HELP...
US...
PLEASE...!



AGH...
GNNNGH...
NNNAGHHH...









LOOK! MORE
OF THEM ARE
DRIFTING IN
OVER THERE!



OH MY
GOSH... I
WONDER
WHAT
HAPPENED
?!



MUST'VE
BEEN A
BIG
BATTLE
SOME-
WHERE

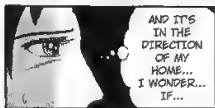


WOW...

THE FAR
SHORE'S A SOLID
BAND OF FIRE,
FROM THE
FIGHTING



IT MUST
HAVE BEEN
A HUGE
FIGHT.



AND IT'S
IN THE
DIRECTION
OF MY
HOME...
I WONDER...
IF...



MASTER
SAKON
SUIKE! LOOK
WHAT'S
WASHED
ASHORE
HERE!



THIS IS HIS
LORDSHIP'S
BATTLE
FLAG!!



LET
ME
SEE
THAT,
KAHEI!

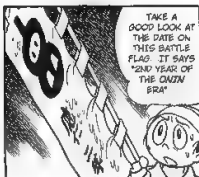


HMM...IT'S
JUST AS I
SUSPECTED
...

IT LOOKS
LIKE FATHER'S
ARMY WAS
INVOLVED...

THAT
EXPLAINS WHY
HE HASN'T SENT
ANYONE HERE
AFTER ME...

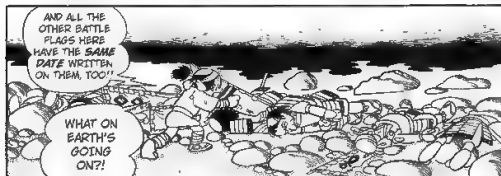
B...BUT
THERE'S
SOMETHING
WEIRD ABOUT
ALL THIS,
MASTER...



TAKE A
GOOD LOOK AT
THE DATE ON
THIS BATTLE
FLAG. IT SAYS
"2ND YEAR OF
THE ONIN
ERA"

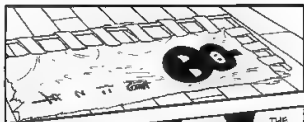
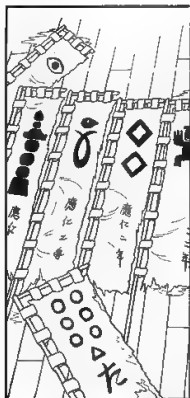


THAT
WAS OVER
THIRTY
YEARS AGO.
WASN'T IT?



AND ALL THE
OTHER BATTLE
FLAGS HERE
HAVE THE SAME
DATE WRITTEN
ON THEM, TOO!!

WHAT ON
EARTH'S
GOING
ON?!



SECOND
YEAR OF
ONIN..
ONIN..

THE
SECOND
YEAR?!



THAT WAS THE
YEAR AFTER THE
COUNTRY WAS
PLUNGED INTO
CIVIL WAR BY
THE ONIN
REBELLION.
LONG BEFORE I
WAS BORN.



THIS
IS TOO
STRANGE
TO BE
TRUE!

BUT IF IT IS. IT
MEANS THAT WITHOUT
MY KNOWING IT,
HISTORY'S BEEN
FLOWING
BACKWARD, INTO
THE PAST!!



WHAT'S
GOING
ON?!

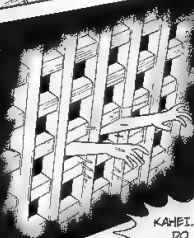
HOW CAN
TIME GO
BACKWARD?

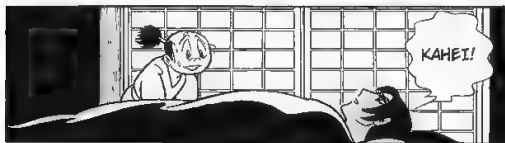
IT'S JUST LIKE
HAPPYAKU BIKUNI
SAID BEFORE
I KILLED HER!
IT'S EXACTLY
AS SHE SAID!



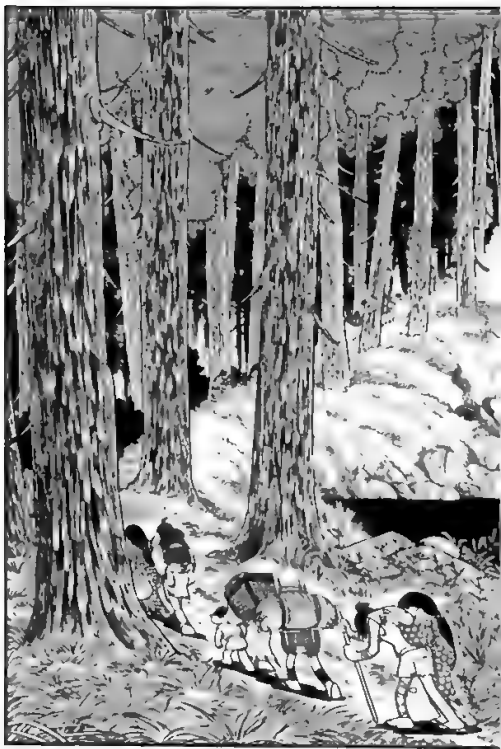
HELP ME !!

THIS IS
IMPOSSIBLE!
TIME CAN'T RUN
BACKWARDS! WE MUST
BE CURSED!











IN THE SECOND YEAR
OF ONIN, MY FATHER
WAS STILL A LOWLY
LEADER OF FOOT
SOLDIERS...

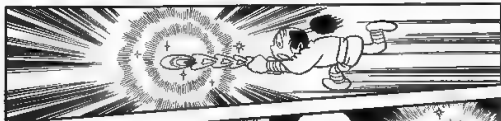
HE WAS STILL
DOING EVERYTHING HE
COULD TO MAKE A NAME
FOR HIMSELF. THESE ARE
PROBABLY ALL PEOPLE HE
SACRIFICED IN HIS
HUNGER FOR GLORY...



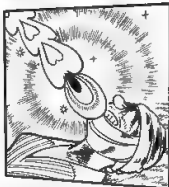
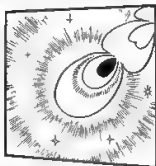
KAHEI!

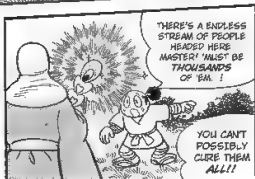


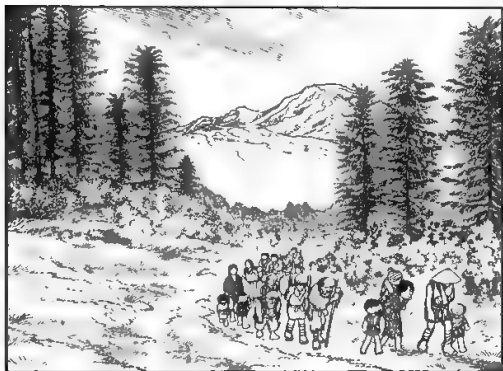
BRING ME
THAT FEATHER
I NEED TO
IMPERSONATE
THE NUN
AGAIN.



VERY WELL!
WHO NEEDS
MY HELP!?





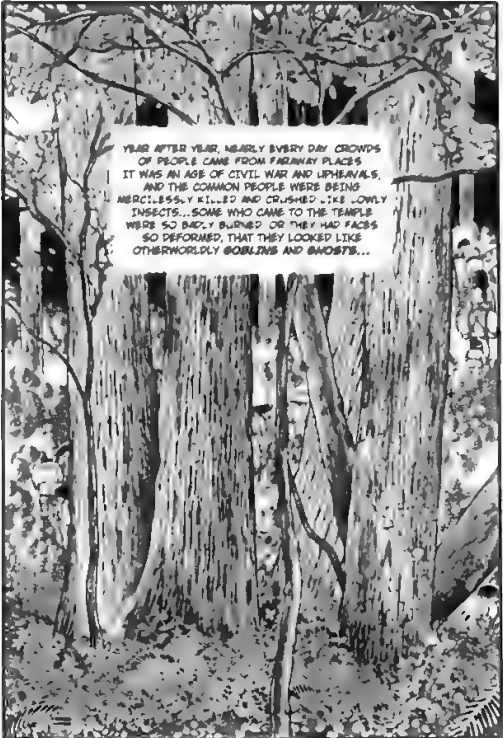


ON THE
VENERABLE MOUNTAIN...
THE MOUNT OF HONORARY
IN FANTASY MOUNTAIN...

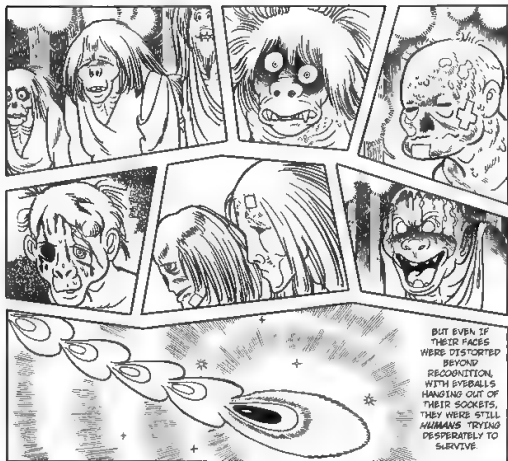
OUR BELOVED NUN
HATES WAR...
PROTECTS THE
COMMON PEOPLE...
HEALS WOUNDS
FROM FIRE AND
SWORD...

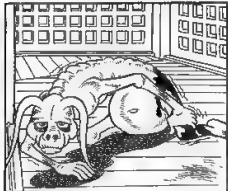
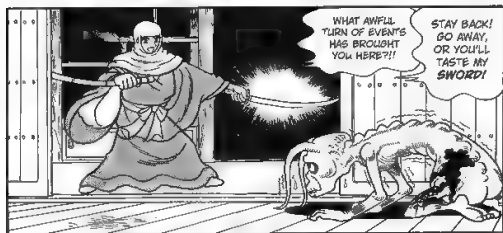
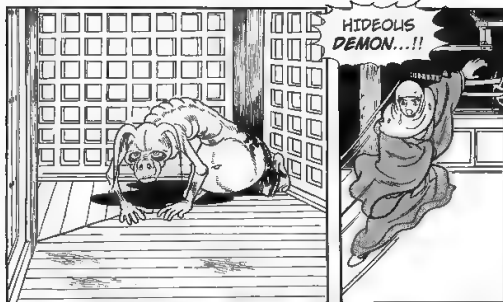
IF IT'S PROOF
YOU WANT...
ASK ANY MAN...
ASK ANY WOMAN...

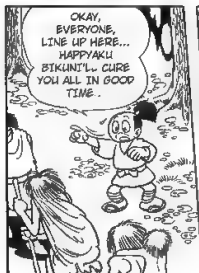




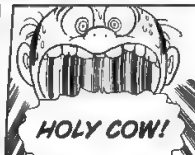
YEAR AFTER YEAR, NEARLY EVERY DAY CROWDS
OF PEOPLE CAME FROM FARAWAY PLACES.
IT WAS AN AGE OF CIVIL WAR AND UPRISINGS,
AND THE COMMON PEOPLE WERE BEING
MERCILESSLY KILLED AND CRUSHED LIKE LOWLY
INSECTS... SOME WHO CAME TO THE TEMPLE
WERE SO BADLY BURNED OR THEY HAD FACES
SO DEFORMED, THAT THEY LOOKED LIKE
OTHERWORLDLY GOBLINS AND GHOSTS...

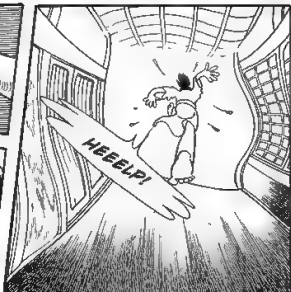
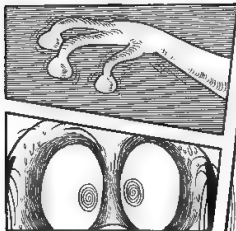


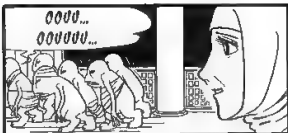
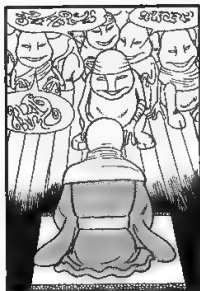












NAMU
AMIDA
BUTSU
NAMU
AMIDA
BUTSU

O DAJINICHI
MYORAI O
MAHA/ATR
OCARU! O
FUSEN, O
SAMANTAB-
KADRA!



KAHEI
THERE'S
NOTHING
TO FEAR,
REALLY...

NO, YOU'RE JUST
TOO FEAR-LESS,
MASTER,
THAT'S ALL...



I
SPOKE
TO
THOSE
SPIRITS.

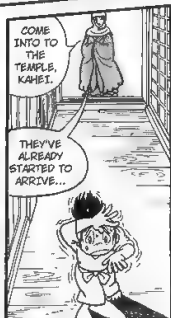
HUMANS
BEINGS
AREN'T THE
ONLY ONES
SUFFERING
NOW ALL THE
SPIRITS OF
HEAVEN AND
EARTH ARE
SUFFERING,
TOO



...AND IF
ALLOWED,
THERE ARE
MANY MORE
THAT WANT
TO BE
HEALED

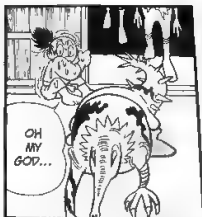
KAHEI,
THEY'LL BE
BRINGING
THEIR
FRIENDS
HERE, SO THIS
IS NOT A TIME
TO BE AFRAID.

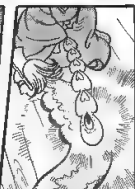
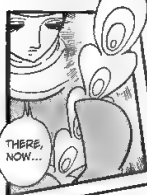
EGADS
!!

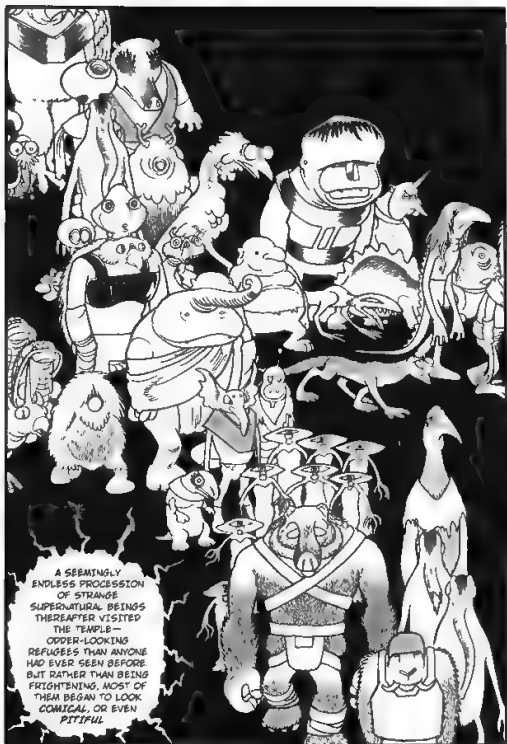


COME
INTO TO
THE
TEMPLE,
KAHEI.

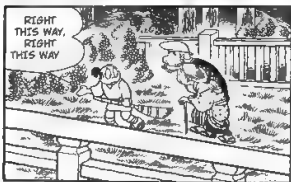
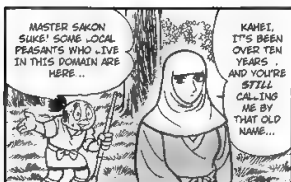
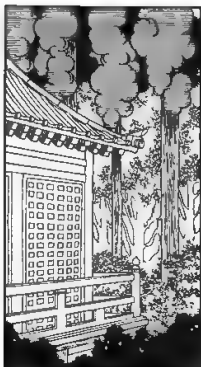
THEY'VE
ALREADY
STARTED TO
ARRIVE...







A SEEMINGLY
ENDLESS PROCESSION
OF STRANGE
SUPERNATURAL BEINGS
THEREAFTER VISITED
THE TEMPLE—
ODDER-LOOKING
REFUGEES THAN ANYONE
HAD EVER SEEN BEFORE.
BUT RATHER THAN BEING
FRIGHTENING, MOST OF
THEM BEGAN TO LOOK
COMICAL, OR EVEN
PITIFUL.





OUTSIDE THESE
TEMPLE GROUNDS,
HISTORY IS
REPEATING
ITSELF

I'LL GROW
UP TO
BE THAT
EIGHTEEN-
YEAR-OLD
AGAIN.

AND COME
HERE TO
KILL ME!!
AND...IT WILL
HAPPEN!
I'LL BE
KILLED!



M'LADY!

THIS
IS TOO
HORRIBLE
...

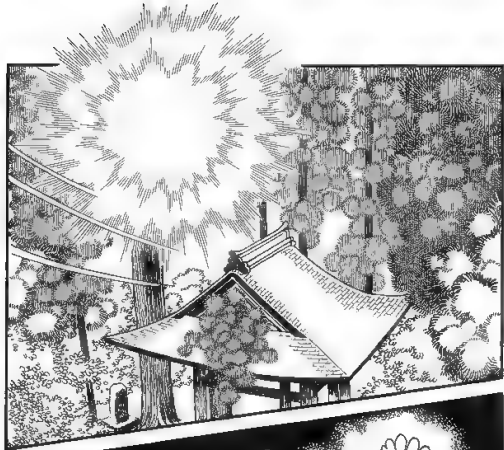


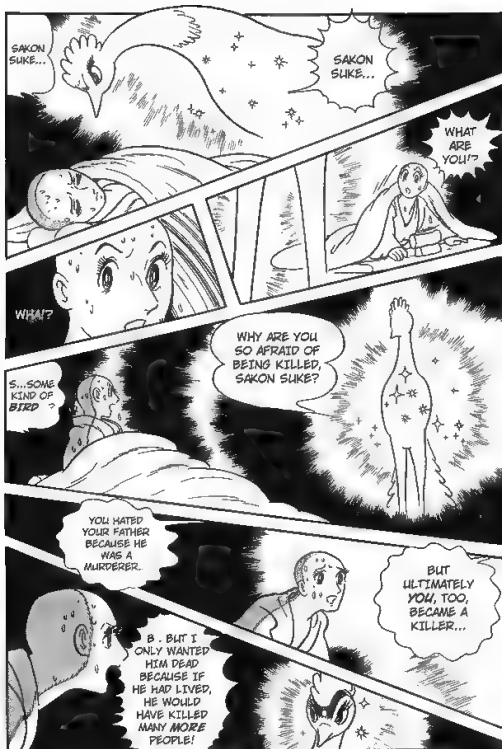
<SOB...SOB...SOB>
I NEVER
REALIZED HOW
AWFUL KARMIC
RETRIBUTION
COULD BE...

I KILLED
A SINGLE NUN..
BUT THAT NUN
WAS ME!
AND NOW THE
CYCLE IS TO BE
REPEATED,
OVER AND
OVER
AGAIN!!











ARE YOU TRYING TO TELL ME YOU HAD NO CHOICE? IT'S THE SAME CRIME, SAKON SUKE... AND THAT'S WHY YOU MUST FACE YOUR JUDGMENT...

YOUR TAIL FEATHERS. THEY LOOK JUST LIKE THE ONE I'VE BEEN USING!!

B...BUT WHO ARE YOU!?

WHAT!? B...BUT HOW CAN THAT HAPPEN...?

THAT'S RIGHT AND HENCEFORTH YOU WILL BE KILLED, OVER AND OVER, FOR AN ETERNITY

HERE, TIME REPEATS ITSELF EVERY THIRTY YEARS, AGAIN AND AGAIN...

AND EVERY TIME A NEW YOU WILL APPEAR, TO KILL YOU AND TAKE YOUR PLACE...

<SOB>...
WHAT A
MISERABLE
FATE...

WHEN CAN I BE
FORGIVEN...?
ISN'T THERE
ANYTHING
I CAN POSSIBLY
DO...?

YOU MUST CONTINUE
YOUR WORK,
FOREVER...
YOU MUST TRY TO
SAVE AS MANY POOR,
REPPRESSED PEOPLE
AS YOU CAN,
FOREVER.

FOR AN
ETERNITY
...?

YES. YOU NOW EXIST IN A
SPACE THAT TRANSCENDS
TIME. BEINGS WILL
ENDLESSLY COME HERE FOR
YOUR HELP, AND THEY MAY
NOT BE OF THIS WORLD...

YOU MEAN
THEY MIGHT
NOT BE
HUMAN?

THAT'S RIGHT.
THERE ARE MANY
WORLDS, IN
ADDITION TO THE
ONE YOU KNOW...



ON EARTH, YOU MAY CALL
THESE BEINGS **DEMONS**
OR **MONSTERS**, **GOBLINS**
OR **EVIL SPIRITS**,
EVEN **HUNGRY GHOSTS...**

BUT THEY ALL HAVE FULL
LIVES ON OTHER WORLDS, AND
COUNTLESS NUMBERS OF THEM
ALSO FACE **TERRIBLE**
PERSECUTION...



IF YOU'RE
TALKING ABOUT
DEMONS, SOME
HAVE ALREADY
COME HERE..

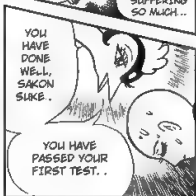
I
KNOW.

I **SENT**
THEM
HERE.

I WANTED TO
SEE HOW YOU
WOULD REACT
TO THEM.



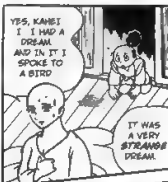
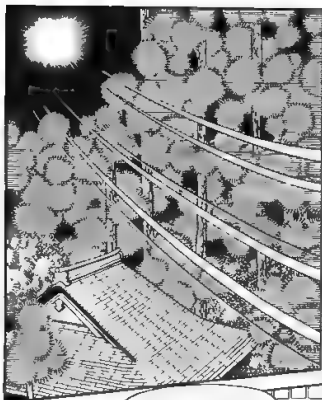
IT WASN'T
HARD FOR ME
TO TREAT
THEM. I FELT
SO SORRY
FOR THEM.
THEY WERE
SUFFERING
SO MUCH..



YOU
HAVE
DONE
WELL,
SAKON
SUKE.

YOU HAVE
PASSED YOUR
FIRST TEST. .



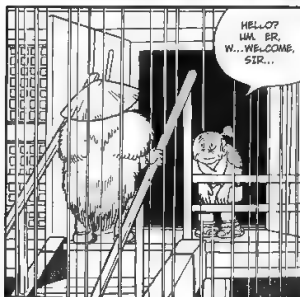




AFTER THAT YEAR AFTER YEAR
PASSED AND DAY AFTER DAY
ALMOST WITHOUT STOPPING TO
REST SARON SUE CONTINUED
TO TREAT HER SUFFERING
VISITORS EVENTUALLY
WITHOUT REALIZING IT
SHE BEGAN TO FORGET HER
OWN SUFFERING AND PAIN
TO DEVELOP A PURE AND
INNOCENT MIND AS CLEAR AS
THE STARS IN THE HEAVENS

THEN ONE DAY

KERRRAAAACCCKKK

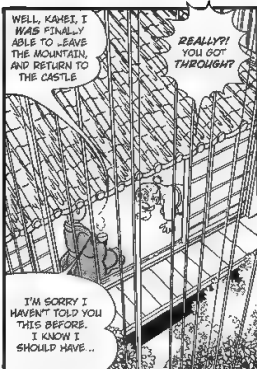








M'LADY!
THANK
GOD
YOU'VE
RETURNED!



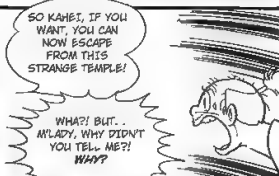
WELL, KAHET, I
WAS FINALLY
ABLE TO LEAVE
THE MOUNTAIN,
AND RETURN TO
THE CASTLE

REALLY?!
YOU GOT
THROUGH?

I'M SORRY I
HAVEN'T TOLD YOU
THIS BEFORE.
I KNOW I
SHOULD HAVE ..



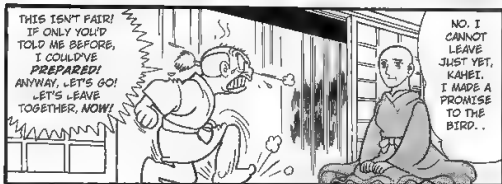
TODAY IS THE
ONE DAY WE ARE
FREE FROM OUR
TIME PRISON.
IN OTHER WORDS,
IT'S THE ONE DAY
WE CAN COME
AND GO AS WE
PLEASE.



SO KAHET, IF YOU
WANT, YOU CAN
NOW ESCAPE
FROM THIS
STRANGE TEMPLE!

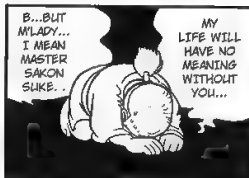
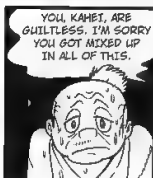
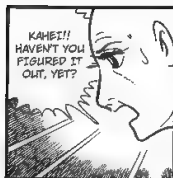
WHAT? BUT...
M'LADY, WHY DIDN'T
YOU TELL ME?!

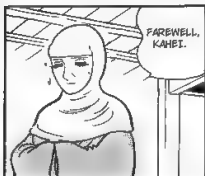
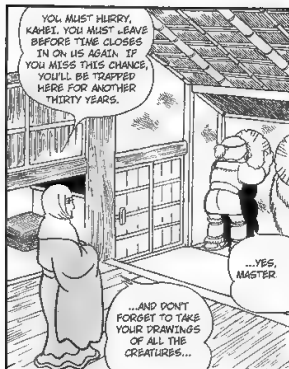
WHY?

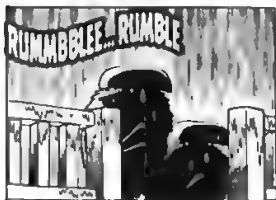
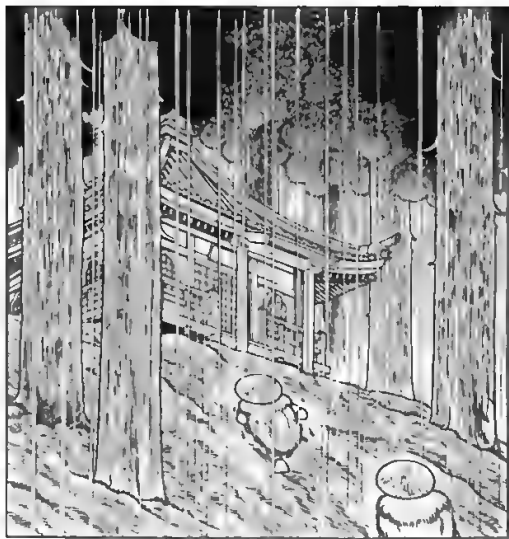


THIS ISN'T FAIR!
IF ONLY YOU'D
TOLD ME BEFORE,
I COULD'VE
PREPARED!
ANYWAY, LET'S GO!
LET'S LEAVE
TOGETHER, NOW!

NO. I
CANNOT
LEAVE
JUST YET,
KAHET.
I MADE A
PROMISE TO
THE BIRD..

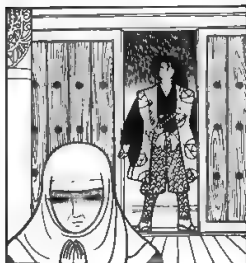
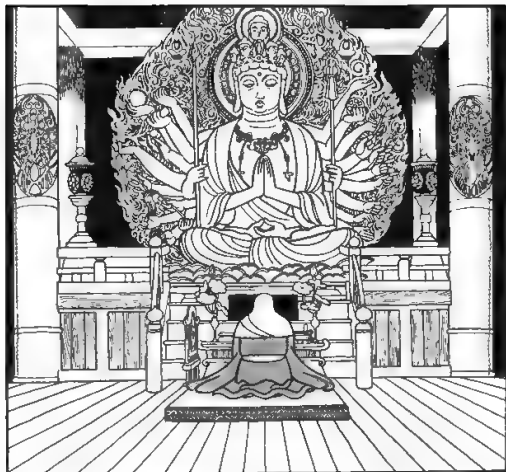


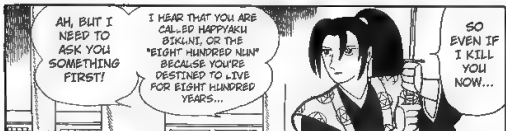




SIGN: HOUJAIJI TEMPLE









ENOUGH
NONSENSE,
WOMAN!



TELL ME, SAKON
NO SUKE, YOU CAME
THROUGH A TERRIBLE
THUNDERSTORM ON
YOUR WAY TO THIS
TEMPLE, DID YOU
NOT?



AND ON THE WAY,
THOUGH HEAVEN AND
EARTH SEEMED
SHROUDED IN
DARKNESS, YOU NO
DOUBT SAW FLASHES
OF LIGHTNING, DID
YOU NOT?



THAT'S RIGHT, I
DID. THERE'S A
STORM RAGING
OUTSIDE RIGHT
NOW...!

SO
WHAT?

WELL, SAKON NO
SUIKE... LET ME TELL
YOU... THIS PLACE IS
CUT OFF FROM THE
REST OF THE WORLD...

TIME HERE...
IS DIFFERENT.
IT FLOWS
BACKWARD.



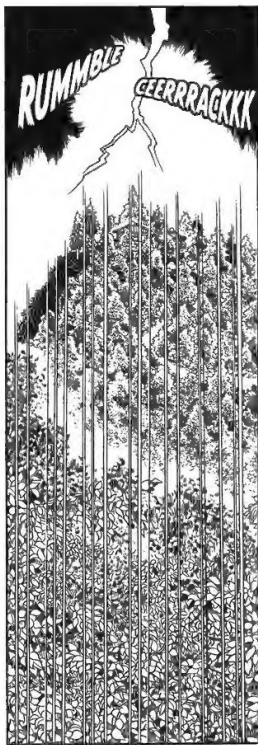
T...TIME
FLOWS
BACKWARD?

W...WHAT
ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT?



GO AHEAD
AND KILL
ME. AFTER
I'M DEAD,
YOU'LL UNDER-
STAND...





KAHET LATER APPRENTICED
HIMSELF TO TOSA MITSUNOBU,
AND TOOK THE NAME OF
TOSA MITSUYOSHI.
TOSA MITSUNOBU'S ILLUSTRATED
SCROLL, HYAKKI YAKO, OR
"NIGHT PARADE OF 100 DEMONS,"
EVENTUALLY BECAME
VERY FAMOUS.

IT IS SAID THAT
MITSUYOSHI,
OR KAHET, SHOWED
HIS DRAWINGS OF
DEMONS TO HIS
TEACHER...

...AND THAT
THESE
DRAWINGS
THEN HELPED
TOSA
MITSUNOBU
CONCEIVE OF
HIS FAMOUS
PAINTINGS.

